



The Yukon River and the community of Galena  
At 1,980 miles long, the Yukon river is the longest river in Alaska. It empties into the Bering Sea. The drainage area is 25 percent larger than Texas.

Galena has a population of approximately 480 people. It is located 270 air miles west of Fairbanks and is reachable only by air, or in the summer, by boat.

Sustained temperatures of  $-40^{\circ}$  F are common during winter.



### Ice Roads and Ice Jams

Through the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program, the off-road community of Galena repaired a levee with NRCS assistance. The levee protects the airport, a school, and other village infrastructure. The levee had been damaged during a flood, which was caused by an ice jam on the Yukon River during spring break-up. The original levee was built during the time that the Air Force operated the runway and base, which were later turned over to the City of Galena.

Approximately 15,600 cubic yards of rock riprap was required for the project. It could be produced locally, about 12 miles outside of the village, at Mueller Mountain. However, there was no road to the quarry. Frozen ground can withstand heavy loads that otherwise would sink into the marshy soil, so an ice road was built specifically for the levee's rock transportation. This is the first ice road built for EWP construction. Contract cost: \$6.4 million (federal contract).

Photos: Top - An excavator working on the Yukon river at sunset. Lower left - Spreading water on the ice road to the rock quarry. Lower right - Mueller Mountain rock quarry.

